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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 IO-13 HA-05
MCT-01 SY-05 /088 W

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P 121944Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5300

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 2762

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: MORE ON THE SAN JUSTO ABDUCTIONS

REF: BUENOS AIRES 2589

1. WE HAVE LEARNED FURTHER DETAILS OF
THE INCIDENT IN WHICH DR. RUAL EDUARDO
PETROUCH AND HIS FIANCEE ELISA MORENO
WERE ABDUCTED OUTSIDE THE CATHEDRAL OF
SAN JUSTO ON MARCH 26, AND OF EVENTS
FOLLOWING.

2. A RELIABLE SOURCE HAS INFORMED US
THAT ELEVEN PERSONS WERE SEIZED UPON
LEAVING THE CHURCH. THE SPECIAL INTENTION
OF THE MASS CELEBRATED THAT EASTER SUNDAY
EVENING AT 1900 (AN HOUR LATER THAN
REPORTED REFTTEL) WAS AVOWEDLY "POLITICAL":
PRAYERS FOR "PODER EJECUTIVO NACIONAL"
PRISONER CIRILA BENITEZ, FURTHER RESEARCH
INDICATES THAT MRS. BENITEZ, A PARAGUAYAN JAILED SINCE
MARCH OF 1976 WHOSE ARGENTINE HUSBAND ESCAPED THE
SECURITY ROUND-UP THAT NETTED HIS WIFE, IS CURRENTLY
BEING HELD AT VILLA DEVOTO BUT HAD BEEN MARKED FOR

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(☒) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part (☒) In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

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EXPULSION. THE NETHERLANDS HAD AGREED TO RECEIVE
MRS. BENITEZ BUT TROUBLE DEVELOPED WHEN IT WAS DISCOVERED

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THAT HER CHILDREN ARE FOR TECHNICAL-LEGAL REASONS NOT TO BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE ARGENTINA. IT HAD BEEN ARRANGED THAT THE SAN JUSTO MASS BE SAID FOR THIS FAMILY.

(COMMENT: UNHCR DIRECTOR KEVIN LYONETTE TOLD US 4/11 THAT MRS. BENITEZ HAD AT LAST ACCEPTED EXPUSION FROM ARGENTINA, EVEN THOUGH HER CHILDREN'S DEPARTURE HAS STILL NOT BEEN RESOLVED.)

3. WE HAVE A SUBSEQUENT REPORT WHICH WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO VERIFY THAT THREE DAYS AFTER THE MASS (MARCH 29) A LARGE GROUP OF SECURITY PEOPLE DRESSED IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES FIRST ABDUCTED A NEIGHBORHOOD LEADER AND LATER IN THE DAY RAIDED THE OFFICE OF A DOCTOR IN THE "CIUDAD GENERAL BELGRANO" AREA ADJACENT TO SAN JUSTO. THE DOCTOR RECEIVED A GUNSHOT WOUND IN THE LEG DURING ABDUCTION. DURING THE FRACAS A GROUP OF NEIGHBORS ASSEMBLED TO PROTEST. SHOTS WERE FIRED OVER THIER HEADS, AND AS SECURITY CARS PULLED AWAY--TAKING THE DOCTOR AND HIS WIFE--SOME OF THE NEIGHBORS PILED INTO A CAR AND FOLLOWED. THE DOCTOR, HIS WIFE AND THE OCCUPANTS OF THE PURSUING CAR HAVE NOT BEEN SEEN SINCE.

4. TWO OTHER ABDUCTIONS OF PHYSICIANS HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO US WHICH APPEAR TO BE RELATED TO THE EVENTS IN SAN JUSTO AND CIUDAD GENERAL BELGRANO: DR. HILDA NORMAL ERENU DE LIWSKI WAS ABDUCTED ON APRIL 5, TAKEN FROM AN AMBULANCE NEAR THE CLINIC WHERE SHE WORKED IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL. HER HUSBAND, DR. NORBERTO IGNACIO LIWSKI, IS BELIEVED BY HIS PARENTS TO HAVE BEEN ABDUCTED THE FOLLOWING DAY. BOTH DOCTORS LIWSKI WERE OPENLY AND FOR A LONG TIME MEMBERS OF THE "PARTIDO COMUNISTA

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REVOLUCIONARIO" (NORBERTO A CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER) WHO WORKED AS VOLUNTEERS IN THE POOR "CIUDAD GENERAL BELGRANO" DISTRICT. (PCR IS NOT A LEGAL PARTY & IS REGARDED BY GOA AS SUBVERSIVE) NORBERTO LIWSKI'S MOTHER AND FATHER WERE TOLD BY ONE OF HIS FRIENDS THAT NORBERTO WAS TO HAVE ATTENDED A MEETING IN THAT AREA OF THE CITY SHORTLY AFTER EASTER, BUT WAS WARNED BY ANOTHER FRIEND TO STAY AWAY SINCE THERE HAD BEEN TROUBLE FOR MEMBERS OF THE GROUP MEETING AS A RESULT OF THE MASS FOR CIRILA BENITEZ. ANOTHER APPARENT LINKAGE OF THE LIWSKI DISAPPEARANCES WITH THE SAN JUSTO EVENTS IS THAT THE AMBULANCE DRIVER SEIZED AT THE SAME TIME HILDA

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NORMAL ERENU DE LIWSKI WAS TAKEN WAS SUBSEQUENTLY LET GO ON A STREET IN SAN JUSTO.

5. THE AREA IN QUESTION IS UNDER THE SECURITY CONTROL OF THE THIRD REGIMENT OF THE TENTH BRIGADE OF THE FIRST ARMY CORPS. WE KNOW OF RAIDS BY ONE SECURITY ARM THAT TAKE PLACE IN THE TERRITORY OF ANOTHER, BUT THE PATTERN OF EVENTS AT SAN JUSTO RAISES THE SUGGESTION AT LEAST THAT PERSONS GEOGRAPHICALLY ATTACHED TO THE ZONE CARRIED OUT THE ABDUCTIONS. REGULAR PROVINCIAL POLICE FORCES IN SAN JUSTO HAVE THE REPUTATION ALSO OF BEING UNCOMMONLY TOUGH OPERATORS.

6. EMBASSY HOPES TO HAVE FURTHER DETAILS ON THE SAN JUSTO ABDUCTIONS EARLY NEXT WEEK.
CASTRO

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